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Investigation of Desirability of New Format for FDD Economic Summary Material

I. PROBLEM

To estimate the desirability--from the point of view of ORR--of replacing FDD periodic economic summary publications with individual items on a 5" x 8" format.

II. ASSUMPTIONS

None

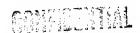
III. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

FLD is presently publishing six periodic economic publi-A . cations of primary interest to CRR as follows:

4	Title	Period
1. 2. 3.	Economic Report on Eastern Europe Economic Information Report on China Report on Extractive Industries in	Weekly Weekly
4.	the USBR Report on USBR Agriculture and Forestry Report on USBR Production of Industrial	Bimonthly Monthly
6.	Equipment Report on USSR Transportation and	Monthly
0.	Communications	Monthly

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At the instigation of OER, the Office of Operations has recently begun furnishing economic items from foreign broadcasts to the intelligence community on 5" x 8" cards. This system replaces the former publication of these items in Economic Abstracts publications (comparable to the FDD publications listed above) and has met with general approval throughout ORR because of its efficiency and convenience for detailed research.



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A poll conducted by the Support Staff, ORR, of all professional personnel in the Economic Research Area has indicated that foreign radio and press in translation is the source of information most heavily used for economic research.

IV. DISCUSSION

A survey of 28 ORR branches*considered to be principal users of the naterial in the publications listed above indicated that 24 favorwith certain qualifications -- the replacement of the FDD economic summary publications with individual items on the 5" x 8" format. Reasons for favoring the new system appear to be: (1) the greater convenience of the 5" x 8" format for reference and filing; (2) the saving in clerical time spent in clipping and preparing for the files those pertinent economic items now appearing in the bound publications; (3) saving of analyst time now spent looking through the bound publications for the pertinent items; (4) the general adoption of the 5" x 8" file because of the prevalence of the use of this format by other intelligence producing agencies; (5) the utility of the file card system for detailed research; (6) the belief that more pertinent items would be received under the proposed system (less or no screening of items by FRD); and (7) the belief that the items would be received in the branches with a shorter time lag than that obtaining at present.

While it is clear that CRR overwhelmingly favors the adoption of the proposed system, there are certain difficulties in connection with the institution of a change in the present method of handling this material. These are discussed in the following subparagraphs:

A. Opposition of FID

The principal officers at FDD believe that the present system has proved most beneficial for the majority of the IAC consumers. It is alleged that the change will mean additional clerical work for FDD. FDD also feels that the new system would adversely affect morale since analysts would consider themselves translators rather than intelligence officers.

^{*}All branches in the Economic Research Area (25), D/E (1), D/T (2). The Industrial Register, OCD, a major consumer of this material, also favors the proposed system.

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B. Added staff Work Load Made Necessary by the New System

The proposed change would lighten the work load on branch personnel but would increase the burden presently falling on the Control Branch (Reading Panel) of the Intelligence Information Staff. This branch, which routes all incoming material in CPR, is already operating on an overtime basis. It is estimated that the new system will involve the reading and distributing of approximately 2,600 additional documents per month. This represents about a 25 percent increase in the number of short documents read and distributed by this Branch. According to the Branch Chief, the new system would necessivate an additional position in the Reading Panel.

C. Recessity of Maintaining a Central File of the 5" x 5" Cares

A logical necessity of the proposed change is the maintenance of a central researchable file of the 5" x 6" cards in 000. Dany branches have expressed their approval of the proposed change contingent upon the availability of such a file. The Circulation Branch, Library Division, OCD, which would normally be responsible for this type of service, states that it does not have the manpower at present to establish and maintain such a file. It is their belief that an additional full-time clerk would be required to organize and maintain this file.

D. Additional Costs

While it has not been possible as yet to ascertain the total additional costs to be incurred, it is known that the proposed change will approximately double the expense in a terms of reproduction costs.

V. CONCL CLUD

ORR favors the replacement of FDD periodic economic summary publications with individual items on a 5° x 8° format, contingent upon the availability of a researchable central file of this material.

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*The Branch divides its reading function into "long "short document" categories. Short documents are of few pages in length. Long documents may run 50 to is not possible to derive a meaningful over-all percentage increase of work load to include both categories.

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